

## Success Story

# Nature's Choice

## Epicor ERP continues to bolster growth path for leading health food supplier



**Nature's Choice™**  
WHOLEFOOD SPECIALISTS

### Company Facts

#### Overview

- X Location—Meyerton, Gauteng, South Africa
- X Industry—Health Food
- X Website—[www.natureschoice.co.za](http://www.natureschoice.co.za)

### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- X Enhancing the efficiency of the workforce through integrated processes and controls.
- X Visibility of information for strategic decision making
- X Evolving the business to stay ahead of the competition

#### Solution

- X Epicor® ERP

#### Benefits

- X Centralized, detailed reporting and insight
- X Optimization of process flow
- X Accurate Decision Making
- X Identification and correction of problem areas

Nature's Choice is one of the leading health food distributors in South Africa, with over 1200 stockists throughout South Africa, Africa and a growing number of trading partners overseas. Nature's Choice produce, pack and sell most of their products in house. The company has been in existence for over 27 years and has established itself as a reputable brand with strong ethics and standards.

### Business Execution with Epicor ERP

"Nature's Choice is always looking for ways in which to improve our production and manufacturing processes (e.g. time, performance quality and cost)." stated Bianca Lewis, Finished Goods Stock Controller for Nature's Choice. "Since the original implementation of Epicor, we have been able to improve our processes dramatically through the visibility and in-sight gained from a fully integrated ERP.", stated Charmain Brandon Raw Materials Stock Controller for Nature's Choice.

Brandon continues in saying: "Natures Choice has transformed from a family run business to a corporate business. Health food is definitely a growing industry, so the competition has increased, and we need to keep pace in order to avoid becoming obsolete."

Since original implementation of Epicor in 2017, Nature's Choice has found that the biggest challenge for the business, is to ensure that all staff are adequately skilled and following and applying the correct business processes on a daily basis. Rosalyn Gottschalk, Financial Director for Nature's Choice stated: "There are many opportunities to acquire additional or complimentary businesses to grow our top line, how-ever to be able to do this we require a stable ERP system which allows for better controls in our process flow to ensure a stable and predictable environment with accurate data for analysis."

Gottschalk continues in saying: "The industry is very competitive and economic times are challenging at present, therefore we need to ensure we work smarter and more efficiently and add as many possible value-add steps in our process flows."

"Our business has gone through major changes in the last year and we are still managing and working through the ripple effect of these changes. Our industry is very cut throat and demanding, so we HAVE to stay ahead in terms of quality, innovation and service." Says Lewis.

### Benefits Realized through the Implementation of Epicor

"Prior to Epicor we had a DOS system with most of our day-to-day operations being manual and off-system. Since going live with Epicor we were able better control our day to day operations as we can link and run most operations via the Epicor ERP system, as each point impacts another." Says Lewis.

"Epicor ERP is currently utilized throughout the entire Nature's Choice within their Production, Manufacturing, procurement, Warehousing, Sales and financials, with first level quality control incorporated into their products." States Scott McKenzie, Managing Director of New Era Solutions.

"Epicor has been fully integrated in our day-to-day operations of our business, since the original implementation, with our biggest challenges arising from lack of procedures being followed and skill levels within our staff, which we are currently addressing. The biggest benefit of a high-end ERP system is the reporting abilities which enables management to make strategic decisions at the right time. It also allows for a level of complexity which suits our business.", continues Gottschalk.

Lewis adds that: “One of the biggest benefits since the implementation of Epicor is the access to information for the use in reporting and decision making as well as being able to see all the information for different departments on one system.”

Brandon says, that from her perspective, the biggest benefits achieved through the Epicor implementation is that:” Epicor has highlighted where we were lacking in our processes. We also have more access to data to create better reports. We are also able to track lots, which was a requirement for our FSSC Certification”.

Lewis says that the Epicor Solution has kept up with company growth and has shown invaluable insights into day-to-day operations: “Our Company has evolved and grown a lot over the past couple of years and the Epicor solution has greatly aided us in our growth. We can make more active, on the go, accurate decisions based on the reporting abilities of the system as well as its rich source of information. It has also forced us to put necessary control measures in place for certain off-system processes”

## Upgrading of Epicor ERP

“When utilizing an ERP system as integrally within your day-to-day operations as we do, one cannot afford to be left behind on technology and the active versions of your core product being utilized”, states Lewis.

Brandon continues in stating that “Not lagging on technology, the enhanced built in reporting capabilities and much improved user interface of the latest version of Epicor were some of the biggest considerations by us before doing the upgrade.”

“To avoid further costs down the line, ensure that we stay current on support with Epicor, and, take advantage of all the new features of the latest version, really made the decision to upgrade easy for us” states Gottschalk.

The Epicor system at Nature’s has assisted with:

- Highlighting where they could start lowering costs (e.g. high stock levels of slow moving lines were identified),
- Highlighted process flaws that can, and are in the process of, being rectified
- improved information flow
- Enhanced controls inside and outside of the Epicor systems – allowing for accurate transactional recording, reporting and supporting strategic decision making
- Making costing decisions for BOM’s and finished products, to improve profits and lower costs, through the usage of reporting and data from the Epicor system
- Tracking missed sales to improve turnaround times

All project team members at Nature’s concurred that the upgrade of the Epicor System was absolutely seamless, caused no down time to the business and has had no negative impact on the users or the day-to-day operations at Nature’s Choice.

## Partnering for Growth

Looking into the future Nature’s Choice is still confident that the original product selection of Epicor has future proved their business and will grow with them. Gottschalk stated that:” Higher volumes of transactions can be easily added to the system and this should have no negative impact on the business’s ability to produce reliable financial information.”

But not only have Nature’s Choice selected a future proof product, they had also selected a future-proof implementation partner.

“It honestly feels like New Era Solutions are a part of our business as they are easy to communicate with, patient and reliable, and also they do their best in understanding how our business works, it’s like they work here.” Stated Lewis.

Ghotschalk and Brandon echoed this sentiment in saying “NES is always hands-on and ready to assist where-ever, and when-ever needed. They always assist us timeously and are very helpful and understanding towards the growing changes of our needs.”

Adeline Cruywagen (Operations Manager for New Era Solutions) stated that “Working with Nature’s during their ERP journey has been an exciting and rewarding time, as Nature’s is a true success story of how an integrated ERP solution can assist in taking your company to new heights, as well as grow with you.”

McKenzie concludes with “We are looking forward to continue our partnership with Nature’s Choice into the future, helping them grow from strength to strength.”

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## About New Era Solutions

Founded in 1999, New Era Solutions began with a core focus on ERP implementations in the Financial Services and Distribution sectors. Our customer base has broadened significantly and today most of our customers fall into the Distribution, Manufacturing, Retail and Service Based sectors.

At New Era Solutions, our sole purpose is to improve our customers' lives. We do this by transforming ERP software into innovative solutions

that provide total control and the foundation for growth. We believe in building long term relationships with our customers that are based on trust, open communication and adding real value to their businesses

New Era Solutions fully understands and drives full lifecycle implementations of complete business solutions for medium and large businesses in this space. With customers across South Africa, United Kingdom and North America.

New Era Solutions, an Epicor value added reseller for close on to two decades, specialises in integrated and customisable IT solutions in partnership with global specialists in ERP, Warehouse Management Systems (WMS), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Mobility. Offering a single-source solution where customers benefit from one seamless working relationship that has all the right connections.

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## About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software that is designed around the needs of our manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industry customers. More than 40 years of experience with our customers' unique business processes and operational requirements is built into every solution—in the cloud or on premises. With a deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions spur growth while managing complexity. The result is powerful solutions that free your resources, so you can grow your business. For more information, [connect with Epicor](#) or visit [www.epicor.com](http://www.epicor.com).